



# COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES

## CHIEF INFORMATION OFFICE

500 West Temple Street  
493 Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration  
Los Angeles, CA 90012

JON W. FULLINWIDER  
CHIEF INFORMATION OFFICER

Telephone: (213) 974-2008  
Facsimile: (213) 633-4733

May 12, 2004

To: Supervisor Don Knabe, Chairman  
Supervisor Gloria Molina, Chair Pro Tem  
Supervisor Yvonne Brathwaite Burke  
Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky  
Supervisor Michael D. Antonovich

From: Jon W. Fullinwider   
Chief Information Officer

Subject: **COUNTYWIDE E-MAIL RETENTION POLICY INITIATIVE STATUS  
REPORT AND PROPOSED PLAN OF ACTION**

On February 4, 2004, I informed your Board of my intent to convene a task force to examine issues relating to the County's e-mail usage and, more specifically, to develop a countywide policy that will serve to govern the retention of e-mail by all County departments.

On March 11, 2004, I advised your Board that I had assembled the Countywide E-mail Retention Policy Task Force, and scheduled an initial kick-off meeting on March 17, 2004. The Task Force meeting, as well as a subsequent meeting on April 13, 2004, took place to formulate a plan for proceeding forward with this effort, with the following County departments participating:

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|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Assessor                               | <input type="checkbox"/> Health Services            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Beaches & Harbors                      | <input type="checkbox"/> Human Relations Commission |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Board of Supervisors – Exec.<br>Office | <input type="checkbox"/> Internal Services          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Chief Administrative Office            | <input type="checkbox"/> Mental Health              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Chief Information Office               | <input type="checkbox"/> Parks & Recreation         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Coroner                                | <input type="checkbox"/> Public Defender            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> County Counsel                         | <input type="checkbox"/> Public Library             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> District Attorney                      | <input type="checkbox"/> Public Social Services     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Children and Family Services           | <input type="checkbox"/> Public Works               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Community and Senior Services          | <input type="checkbox"/> Sheriff                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Human Resources                        | <input type="checkbox"/> Superior Court             |
|   | <input type="checkbox"/> Treasurer/Tax Collector    |

Board of Supervisors

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As a result of these meetings, it was determined by the Task Force that the adoption of a formal countywide policy governing e-mail retention would likely create even greater problems than it was intended to solve. This is due in large measure to the vastly diverse record retention criteria that apply across County departments, rendering any formal policy for the retention (and destruction) of e-mail operationally disruptive and unenforceable. Instead, and in lieu of a formal policy, the Task Force recommended that countywide guidelines for e-mail retention be drafted and circulated for further review and comment. These guidelines would provide County departments with basic strategies for the efficient and effective management of their e-mail records, from which they could appropriately deviate as their record retention requirements or other business practices and needs dictate, without violating County policy.

Accordingly, a draft document entitled ***Countywide Guidelines for the Retention and Destruction of E-mail*** has been developed and is currently under review by County Counsel to ensure that the provisions set forth in these guidelines are not in conflict with existing County policy, state and federal statutes (including HIPAA regulations) or current California or federal case law.

As indicated previously, I will continue to provide your Board with a project status report every 60 days until this effort concludes. I will also submit the final document that emerges from this effort for your review and discussion, if desired.

If you have any questions or require additional information concerning this initiative, please contact me at (213) 974-2008, or in my absence, Jonathan Williams, Chief Deputy, at (213) 974-2080.

JWF:EB:ygd

c: Department Heads  
Department I/T Managers/CIOs  
Countywide E-mail Retention Policy Task Force Members